

SAT JUL 26 1986

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

A headline in Friday's Tribune incorrectly stated that Navy enlisted man Anthony McKnight, 32, will stand trial on charges of slaying six Eastbay prostitutes. He is charged with attempting to kill the women.

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SOME STORYS SAY JUNE OF 86 ITS FEB. OF 86.

DATE; 5-20-87

Ex-sailor sentenced to 63 years in prison for sexual attacks

FRI AUG 14 1987

By Will Jones
The Tribune

A former Navy sailor was sentenced yesterday to 63 years in state prison for a string of brutal sexual attacks on women in Oakland and Emeryville over a 15-month period.

Anthony McKnight, 33, was given the lengthy sentence by Alameda County Superior Court Judge Robert Byers, who described the crimes as "despicable and vicious."

A jury convicted McKnight in June on a variety of charges stemming from attacks on six women, who were identified at the time as prostitutes. The attacks occurred between October 1984 and McKnight's arrest in January 1986.

The convictions came on four counts of attempted murder, three counts of rape, two counts of mayhem and one count each of kidnapping and forced oral copulation.

Prosecutor Ken Burr had recommended that McKnight be sentenced to 80 years and four months in prison because of the "viciousness" of the crimes.

"The defendant is a serial rapist of prostitutes, and if he had his way the six women who testified against him would never

have been found alive," Burr said in a letter to the Probation Department.

Burr noted in court that McKnight only had a minor prior criminal record before the attacks.

"But he made up for the loss of time during a 15-month period of carnage," the prosecutor added.

McKnight's lawyer, Al Hymer of the Public Defender's Office, asked that his client be sentenced to nine years in prison.

Hymer said McKnight, who was stationed at the Alameda Naval Air Station until his arrest, still insists the victims mistakenly identified him as the attacker and maintains he is innocent.

McKnight's wife, Darellyn, who testified on behalf of her husband during the trial, told the Probation Department that she still doesn't believe he committed the crimes.

"After being shown the evidence against him, I was absolutely dumbfounded," she said in a letter from Buffalo, N.Y., where she now lives with the couple's two children, ages 1 and 3.

"Even with the evidence, I

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would have to just about hear him admit to the crimes to really believe he did it," her letter said.

She noted that the youngest child was born after McKnight was arrested and that he never has seen his son.

According to the prosecution's case, McKnight's crime spree started Oct. 22, 1984, when he kidnapped a woman, slashed her throat, stabbed her in the chest, forced her to orally copulate him, raped her and left her for dead at a truck loading dock in West Oakland.

The other attacks of which he was convicted were:

■ The brutal beating of an admitted prostitute on Sept. 16, 1985. The woman was beaten with a tire iron, choked with her own belt and left on a dirt road off Skyline Boulevard in Oakland.

■ The rape and beating of another prostitute at a housing construction site off Keller Avenue in Oakland on Oct. 21, 1985. The victim was beaten with a lug wrench until she escaped by hiding in a drainage ditch.

■ The stabbing of two women in West Oakland on Dec. 27, 1985. One woman was stabbed 10 times and the other one was

slashed along the side of her face. She now has a disfiguring scar.

■ The rape of a prostitute in Emeryville on Jan. 20, 1986. The victim was choked and left battered and bloody in an industrial area.

Oakland police said they also considered McKnight a prime suspect in the deaths of up to seven women in Oakland between August and December 1985, but never charged him with murder because of a lack of evidence.

Ironically, after McKnight's trial had been in progress for nearly two months, one of the jurors told Judge Byers that she once dated McKnight and he treated her well.

The juror said she didn't recognize McKnight until Burr held up a police photo of the defendant during his final arguments to the jury.

The woman, who said she went to a movie with McKnight in the fall of 1982, was dismissed as a juror and replaced by an alternate.

Public Defender Hymer, who argued against dismissing the woman, the only black juror on the panel, said McKnight was not in California at the time the juror said she dated him.